



Montgomery County, Maryland  
Department of Health and Human Services

## **COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011**

### **Mission Statement**

#### **MISSION OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION**

The thirty-six member Commission on Juvenile Justice is tasked with:

Evaluating State and County-funded programs and services that serve juveniles and families involved in the juvenile justice system, to address capacity, utilization, and effectiveness;

Informing and advising the Juvenile Court, County Council members, the County Executive, and State legislators on the needs and requirements of juveniles and the juvenile justice system;

Studying and submitting recommendations, procedures, programs, or legislation concerning prevention of, and programs addressing, juvenile delinquency and child abuse or neglect;

Making periodic visits to juvenile facilities serving Montgomery County juveniles; and

Promoting understanding and knowledge in the community regarding juvenile needs and effectiveness of programs.

# **HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE**

The Montgomery County Juvenile Court was created by Maryland statute in 1931. The Juvenile Court Committee, along with its counterparts in other Maryland jurisdictions, was formed to support and assist an evolving juvenile justice system. Under County law enacted in 1981, the Juvenile Court Committee began serving in an advisory capacity to the Council and Executive. The Juvenile Justice Court Committee of Montgomery County served this role actively and effectively. On April 4, 2000, the Montgomery County Council passed legislation revising and expanding the functions of the Juvenile Court Committee, and transformed it from a committee into the Commission on Juvenile Justice, effective July 14, 2000.

Thoughtful analyses and position papers on such far-reaching issues as judicial appointments, treatment alternatives, State legislation, local budget allocations, and disproportionate minority representation in the juvenile justice system have become associated with the work of the Juvenile Court Committee and the Commission on Juvenile Justice.

## **MEETINGS**

The Commission on Juvenile Justice meets on the third Tuesday of each month, with the exception of August and December. Committee meetings are held from 7:00pm-7:45pm. Commission meetings are held from 7:50pm -9:00pm. Commission meetings are open to the public and are held at the Juvenile Assessment Center, 7300 Calhoun place, Suite 600, Rockville, Maryland 20855. The work of the Commission is supported and staffed by the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Behavior Health and Crisis Services, Juvenile Justice Services.

### **Contact Information**

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## **A Message from the Chair Mary Poulin**

As you will see when you read the articles in this year's report, over the course of the year the Commission has continued to focus on areas of concern from previous years and has addressed new issues. We remain committed to developing and maintaining relationships with people and organizations involved in the juvenile justice system. This has helped us to identify and address concerns regarding youth served in the juvenile justice system. For example, at our annual meeting with the judges the Commissioners learned of a concern regarding placement of youths with mental health problems in residential treatment centers and began conversations with relevant parties to address this concern. Each of our three committees has worked diligently on special topics. The Care, Custody, and Placement Committee were focused on trying to gain needed services for females. The Evaluation and Analysis Committee continued attempts to obtain data on the Violence Prevention Initiative. The Government and Community Relations Committee continued outreach to key policy makers.

Field trips as well as speakers and discussions at Commission meetings helped inform the development of goals for the upcoming year that were set at our annual retreat. A primary theme over the course of the next year will be positive youth development (PYD). PYD is a focus in efforts around the County and the Commission intends to support efforts in this area.

There are a few other items important to note that relate to the work of the Commission. We were particularly concerned about the County budget for juvenile services, but found it challenging this year to make specific recommendations for funding. We are committed to obtaining information in the next year to make budget recommendations. Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the article written by the Commission's representative from the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS); it discusses DJS priorities in the County throughout the year. In addition to a new Secretary, there have been numerous changes in DJS personnel in the County. The Commission has been working with the new personnel to share County concerns and learn about any new directions being taken by DJS.

If after reading the report you should have questions about the work of the Commission, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We welcome your inquiries.

# **Commission on Juvenile Justice** **Vision Statement and Objectives**

## **Vision**

The Commission envisions a partnership between the State and counties in which the State is responsive to locally identified, data-driven service needs and creates a framework for optimal service to youths and their families. This partnership recognizes that the counties are in a position to identify and propose solutions, to align and coordinate existing county-provided services to youths, and build on existing in-county relationships among local agencies, non-profit organizations and universities. This partnership will strengthen mutual accountability and support counties' responsibility to serve their local community. Finally, this partnership will enable the State to enact standards of practice and care that will ensure equity across counties.

## **Commission on Juvenile Justice Membership 2010-2011**

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### **Executive Committee**

Mary Poulin, Chair  
Christine Bartlett, Vice Chair  
Mark Resner, Editor  
Francha Davis, Government and Community Relations Chair  
Wendy Pulliam, Evaluation and Analysis Chair  
Elijah Wheeler and Jennifer Gauthier, Care, Custody and Placement Co-Chairs

### **Citizen Commissioners**

Jennifer Barmon	Sharon Kelly
Christine Bartlett	Mondi Kumbula-Fraser
Kim Bobola	Mehul Madia
Stacey Boehm-Russell	Dana Pisanelli
Carole Brown	Mary Poulin
Susan Cruz	Wendy Pulliam
Margaret Currie	Mark Resner
Sharon Diamant	Paul Vance
Christopher Fogleman	Elijah Wheeler
Jennifer Gauthier	Ronald Wright
Barbara Holtz	
Ashok Kapur	
Gladstone Marcus	

**Program Manager**  
Diane M. Lininger, LCSW-C

### **Agency Members**

Margaret Burrowes, *State's Attorney's Office*  
Francha Davis, *Court Appointed Special Advocates*  
Blaine Clarke, *Department of Health and Human Services – Juvenile Justice*  
Risa Mainprize, *Juvenile Court*  
Amy Morantes, *Department of Health and Human Services – Child Welfare*  
Susan Farag, *County Council*  
Maurice Sessoms and Dave Thompson, *Department of Juvenile Services*

Kathi Rhodes, *Montgomery County Police Department – Family Crime Division*  
Mary K. Siegfried, *Office of the Public Defender*  
Michael Subin, *County Executive's Office*  
Lauree Hemke, *Montgomery County Public Schools*

### **Emeritus Members**

Jeffrey Penn  
Lee Haller

## **Commission Structure 2010-2011**

During FY-11, the Commission had four committees:

The **Executive Committee** represents the Commission at meetings with the Department of Health and Human Services Director, County Executive, and County Council; drafts and presents testimony on legislation of interest; and provides administrative support to the Commission. The Executive Committee organizes Commission membership, orientation, the annual work plan, and the annual report. The Commission Vice-Chair facilitates committee meetings.

The **Government and Community Relations Committee** recommends the legislative agenda for the Commission. Its duties include lobbying and testifying before local and State legislators. The Committee monitors and tracks legislation that affects the juvenile justice system. The Government and Community Relations Committee also oversees the annual forum with the Juvenile Court judges.

The **Care, Custody, and Placement Committee** monitors and tracks the quality of care provided to Montgomery County juvenile justice youth who are in community placements or residential facilities, which may be located outside of the County. Its duties include examination of mental and physical health care, education, programming, and transportation.

The **Evaluation and Analysis Committee's** role is to evaluate, analyze, review, and monitor programs, plans, and Commission issues. There have been a number of plans and reports developed to address juvenile justice and at-risk children's issues. The committee's role is to analyze and report on the progress of established plans.

The Commission also worked within *ad hoc* committees, as follows:

**Retreat Committee**

**Orientation Committee**

**Nomination Committee for Executive Committee**

Members of the Commission served on the following County boards, commissions, committees, and task forces, and reported to the Commission on their activities:

- **Montgomery County Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission (CJCC)**
- **Juvenile Drug Court Task Force**
- **Montgomery County Gang Prevention Task Force**
- **Juvenile Justice Information System Task Force**
- **Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families – Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee**
- **Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families - Children with Intensive Needs Committee Youth Strategies Initiative**
- **Operations Board for the Tree House (Montgomery County's Child Assessment Center)**
- **Juvenile Mediation Committee**
- **Teen Court Advisory Committee**
- **Family Justice Center Steering Committee**

In addition to its committees and the above referenced groups, the Commission worked closely with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of the Public Defender, State's Attorney's Office, Family Crimes Division of the Police, Montgomery County Circuit Court, Court Appointed Special Advocate, Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), Montgomery County Public Schools, and Office of the County Executive.

## **FY-11 Annual Retreat Report**

**By Lauree Hemke, Montgomery County Public School representative to the Commission on Juvenile Justice**

On May 21, 2011, twenty members of the Montgomery County Commission on Juvenile Justice met at the Office of Public Defender for its sixth annual retreat. The purpose of the retreat was to develop a work plan on juvenile justice issues for the following year.

The Commission began its work by reviewing its accomplishments for the past year. These accomplishments included educating new members, continued research of juvenile services including male/female disparity in services, shelter issues, and the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI). In an effort to learn more about services both within the county and without, members participated in field trips to the Fairfax County Detention Center, Montgomery County Teen Court and Waxter Children's Center. In

addition, the committees within the Commission each heard presentations from various Department of Juvenile Services and other agency leaders, and participated in an annual meeting with Montgomery County juvenile judges. Furthermore, the Commission was pleased to receive approval for a website, which will serve as another means for communicating with the community. The Commission also heard from Mike Subin, who shared information about the County Council's budget cycle. In addition, the commission heard feedback from its members about changes in its meeting format. Because of the feedback, Commission members agreed to commit to additional meeting formats, including the use of teleconferencing to complete some work and use the time and resources of members more efficiently.

Faced with a tough economy and recognizing that each of the agencies represented on the Commission participates in valuable work for at-risk youth, the Commission did not make budget recommendations to the County Council for this year. With the above element as a driving force, the Commission's retreat turned its focus to developing a work plan to support the county council's efforts to sustain programs that foster efficient and effective partnerships among agencies. The Commission decided to focus this year on Positive Youth Development (PYD) programs and particularly on PYD programs that are supported by multiple agencies.

These programs take a strength-based approach that provides prevention, intervention and suppression services for our at-risk youth. In its work, the Commission will review programs and services and will work to build relationships at the county, state and national level with individuals, organizations, and agencies that affect the treatment of juveniles in our region.

The Commission agreed to focus on seven goals, with each committee taking responsibility for completing action steps that will lead to meeting the goals. These goals are:

1. Study and review collaborative programs, including those from other jurisdictions.
2. Advocate for collaborative programs.
3. Review and engage major stakeholders in discussions about collaborative programs designed for Positive Youth Development.
4. Consider budget items that promote Positive Youth Development partnerships programs.
5. Consider and review legislative processes that support Positive Youth Development programs.
6. Provide opportunities for major government agencies to engage in discussions about programs.
7. Review Commission's internal decision-making processes.

Each committee met to identify action steps and has continued that work in subsequent meetings.

# **TEEN COURT VISIT**

**By Dana Pisanelli, Citizen Member of the Commission on Juvenile Justice**

In October 2010, several Commissioners paid an evening visit to Montgomery County Circuit Court to watch a very successful offshoot of the juvenile justice system called Teen Court. For newly-appointed Commissioners, in particular, the experience was both informative and inspiring.

Teen Court is a program run by, and for, Montgomery County teens. The program focuses on first-time juvenile offenders and seeks to prevent future criminal behavior. An offender, called a respondent, must admit involvement in the crime charged, which is generally a misdemeanor. Examples of offenses handled in Teen Court include alcohol violations, possession of marijuana, theft, and malicious destruction of property.

Though a judge who has volunteered his or her time presides over the proceeding, the clerk, bailiff and jury are volunteer teens. After a brief hearing during which the respondent explains his or her behavior and the jurors pose questions, the jurors retire to deliberate privately and determine the appropriate disposition for the offense based on guidelines provided by the judge. If the respondent satisfactorily completes the sanctions imposed, the original charges will be dropped. In cases the Commissioners witnessed, the sanctions included community service, referral to an educational program, and writing letters of apology to parents and/or members of the community.

Montgomery County Teen Court was created in 1997 after the State's Attorney's Office formed an inter-agency group that included representatives from the judiciary, police department, school system, defense bar, a student advisory board, and the Department of Juvenile Justice. The group created the guidelines and policies for the program, which is administered by the State's Attorney's Office.

Created to divert first time youthful offenders from future criminal behavior, Montgomery County Teen Court has been extremely successful in reducing juvenile crime and recidivism. Approximately 90% of respondents have not committed another crime. Such favorable outcomes provided tremendous support for expansion in Maryland and throughout the country. According to the Maryland Teen Court Association (MDTCA), there are currently more than 1,300 Teen Courts across 49 states, including ten counties in Maryland.



# **Department of Juvenile Services (DJS)**

## **Montgomery County: The Year in Review**

**By Dave Thompson, Metro Regional Director and Department of Juvenile Services Representative to the Commission on Juvenile Justice**

On September 8, 2010, I began my appointment as Metro Regional Director. I came to the Department from Baltimore City Department of Social Services where I served as the Deputy Director having oversight of Adult, Family, and Children Services. A great deal of work was accomplished under multiple priorities in the Region and County. These accomplishments include VPI, Reduction of the Use of Detention, and Structure and Accountability to name a few.

The work under these priorities is outlined below:

### **Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI):**

DJS ensured consistent operation within the boundaries and expectations of the VPI Standard Operating Procedures.

VPI has been successfully structured and placed under the supervision of one Assistant Regional Director Quanetta West. Ms. West's primary role is to provide oversight to the teams providing VPI level of supervision to youth in both Montgomery and Prince George Counties in an effort to ensure compliance with the Department's Standard Operating Procedures and ensure that timely service delivery occurs.

### **Reduction of the Use of Detention:**

DJS ensured the consistent application of Alternatives to Detention, Evidence Based Programs, and Graduated Responses.

There has been a noticeable reduction in the use of detention in Montgomery County. At the end of the week of September 16, 2011, there were 11 youths detained out of the over 500 open probation cases in the county.

Evidence Based Services included the addition of 15 additional Functional Family Therapy slots and 5 Multi-system Family Therapy. Thus, Montgomery County has a full complement of community-based services to support families.

### **Structure and Accountability:**

DJS established the ability to measure and respond to issues that negatively affect service provision to children and families.

A number of procedures have been developed and implemented to add structure and accountability to the day-to-day tasks that a case manager and supervisor must complete in an effort to ensure that families and children receive needed services while

assisting in the effort of public safety. Moreover, a data driven practice has been fully implemented and the use of data to drive practice is the norm.

**Over the year, there has been a change in leadership to include:**

Frank Duncan - Acting Assistant Director: June 2011

Quanetta West – Assistant Regional Director: September 2010.

Both Maurice Sessoms and Dennis Nile left the department to pursue other endeavors.

In the coming year we will be concentrating on quality case practice in an effort to improve outcomes for the children and families of Montgomery County.

## **Monthly Meeting Highlights for FY-11**

### **July 2010**

Commission members voted in the FY-11 Executive Board: Mary Poulin – Chair; Christine Bartlett - Vice-Chair; Mark Resner – Editor; Francha Davis - Chair of Government and Community Relations Committee; Elijah Wheeler and Jennifer Gauthier - Co-Chairs of Care, Custody and Placement Committee; Wendy Pulliam - Chair of the Evaluation and Analysis Committee.

Margaret Burrowes, Agency Member for the State’s Attorney’s Office, spoke to the Commissioners about her duties at the State’s Attorney’s Office.

### **August 2010**

The Commission does not meet in August.

### **September 2010**

George E. Simms, III, Esq., Community Prosecution Team Leader and State’s Attorney’s Office Representative on the Interagency Truancy Review Board (ITRB), was our guest speaker. Mr. Simms distributed a summary of the Montgomery County Truancy Intervention Process that describes the six steps in the intervention process including a summary of the 2009 ITRB referral and performance data.

There is a Truancy Court Pilot program in Montgomery County involving Key Middle School in Silver Spring and Neelsville Middle School in Germantown, which had truancy rates greater than 10% in 2009 though not at the 20% rate set by the State. This is a voluntary program where truants meet with the Judge once a week. Mr. Simms believes the emphasis should be on addressing truancy problems early on in the process. However, Mr. Simms commented that in some cases there are children who willfully choose not to go to school even when parents have done everything within their power to change this behavior.

### **October 2010**

Commissioners reported on a field trip to Teen Court that occurred on October 13, 2010 (Please see article on page 8).

Captain Kathi Rhodes, from the Family Crimes Division of the Montgomery County Police (FCD), is our Agency Member from the Montgomery County Police Department. Captain Rhodes spoke to the Commission about what the FCD does and how it relates to the Commission. There are three sections of the FCD:

- Outreach – domestic violence, elder abuse, parental abduction, vulnerable adults.
- Child Abuse and Sex Abuse – physical and sexual abuse.
- Pedophile - includes the Offender unit, child exploitation, internet related crimes, stranger kidnappings and prevention. The Pedophile section works closely with Child Protective Services, State's Attorney, and multi-disciplinary teams. They have a forensic interviewer.

### **November 2010**

Maurice Sessoms, Assistant Regional Director, Department of Juvenile Services, spoke to the Commission about DJS and how it relates to the Commission. Mr. Sessoms announced that David Thompson of the Baltimore Dept of Social Services is now in charge of Montgomery and Prince George's County as Regional Director.

Mr. Sessoms reported that DJS is looking to the Commission and Legislative delegates to push for general improvement in areas of DJS work where staff turnover is an area of concern. The Commission's work has helped Noyes, which is an older facility that is showing improvement. There are security cameras and the management staff are able to monitor the resident units effectively. The installed monitoring system has recording capabilities that increase the effectiveness.

Retention of staff is improved at this time due to the CJJ advocating for changes. The hiring process is quicker, with the implementation of prescreening, six-week training periods, and shorter caseloads.

Salary continues to be a concern. A disparity exists between Montgomery County (\$27,000) and Western Maryland (\$33-35,000). The state of the current economy is helpful to retention, and more local people can be employed.

At the November meeting, Nick Moroney, Assistant Director for the Juvenile Justice Monitoring unit, gave a short presentation about his organization, which was founded 10 years ago because of DJS issues.

Following a boot camp scandal involving a suicide, the Office of the Attorney General developed the unit as a statutory body to monitor DJS facilities. There are 6 to 7 employees engaged around detention treatment. They monitor licensed facilities of 40 to 50 kids. The unit produces quarterly reports for the House and Senate Committees. There is also a bi-annual report that highlights issues and incidents such as fire infractions. DJS provides comments on the report. Special reports are provided when a time sensitive issue such as a fire or a security breach occurs. The Charles H. Hickey School report is an example.

The top initiatives are out-of-state placement of kids, expanding therapeutic services, early intervention for effectiveness, metrics on recidivism, discrimination against girls as it relates to status offenses, and the lack of shelter care resulting in placement at Alfred D. Noyes Center and Waxter Children's Center.

### **December 2010**

The Commission does not meet in December.

### **January 2011**

The Commission had a discussion regarding policies and procedures at their January meeting.

Mary Poulin, Chair of the Commission on Juvenile Justice, did a presentation on the Commission's work on Evidence Based Programming for the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission on January 26, 2011.

### **February 2011**

Mary Poulin, Chair, reported on a meeting she attended on February 10, 2011 with the County Executive to receive information on Boards, Commissions and Committees. The County Executive talked about the budget, budget cuts and the effects on the juvenile population. Mike Subin, Agency member representative from the County Executive's Office, has been attending cluster groups who have been meeting with Office of Management and Budget for several weeks with regard to budget cuts. He relayed that the County Executive has stated that the budget cuts will be deep and painful.

Mike Subin explained the guidelines regarding voting during the Commission meetings. Some discussion ensued and information on a matter requiring a vote by the Commission will be distributed in advance in order for the members to be prepared to vote on it. There will be a continuing conversation with the County Attorney about revisions regarding our By-Laws and our communication guidelines.

### **March 2011**

Commission on Juvenile Justice Chairperson, Mary Poulin, introduced the Juvenile Judges who attended the meeting. They were Honorable John W. Debelius III, Administrative Judge, Honorable David A. Boynton, Honorable Richard E. Jordan, Honorable Cynthia Callahan and the Honorable Joseph M. Quirk. The Honorable Louise G. Scrivener was not present. Commission members were asked to introduce themselves.

Following the introductions, the Chairperson outlined the functions of the Commission and read the Commission vision statement. Commission members then proceeded to ask the judges a set of prepared questions. The judges were asked to respond to each question.

The issues/concerns brought up at the meeting included the following:

- Residential – time to place kids is becoming increasingly difficult
- Budget constraints
- Jobs skills training
- GED at Waxter Children's Center (a money problem)
- Recidivism rates at private centers and the need for metrics
- Rotating judges due to space (1 judge, 1 family)
- Need to expand VPI, which is effective
- Placement of youths with mental health problems into residential treatment centers (RTCs)

A further discussion involved long-term kids, hybrid rotation, and a need for relationships with the kids and judges. Uma Ahluwalia, Director of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), suggested that the Commission send a letter to the State Legislature to highlight some of the issues discussed.

The Commissioners visited the Fairfax County Juvenile Detention Center on Wednesday, March 23. Commissioners provided a report and the consensus was that it was very impressive. Staffing is dealt with in a better manner than some DJS centers. The school is on the property. All staff members have at least a bachelor's degree. There is no barbed wire fence and there is an atmosphere of discipline.

#### **April 2011**

L. Blaine Clarke, LCSW-C, Family Intervention Specialist, Violence Prevention Intervention Specialist and Commission on Juvenile Justice Agency member, spoke at our meeting. Mr. Clarke has a caseload of 29 kids -- 23 in community and 6 in placement. Youth are assigned through the DJS. Initiated in Baltimore City, the program is now statewide. The Program has been shown to reduce juvenile homicides. Youth are eligible based on risk factors, including perpetrating crimes or being victims. Referrals can come from all levels of DJS. Assignment is dependent on whether youth meet the criteria, which is based on adjudicated offenses – crimes of violence. A youth may have been charged as an adult and waived down. Supervision is the hallmark of the program. All kids on level 1 are on GPS. A Probation Officer has to have five contacts with the youth per week. Level 2 requires 4 contacts. Level 3 requires 3 contacts. Each level is 90 days or more. Curfew checks are done. The VPI team meets every Tuesday and discusses its caseloads. When a youth violates a condition of probation, he or she faces graduated sanctions that may culminate in a violation of probation finding. Blaine's job is concerned with mental health. Mr. Clarke does crisis intervention, makes referrals, and follows up. Mr. Clarke goes into schools and attends meetings or gets kids involved in GED. No long-term studies have been done in Montgomery County/Statewide regarding recidivism rates.

The Commission discussed our meeting in March with the Juvenile Judges. Mary Siegfried opened the discussion to see if any members had follow up questions. Mary reported that instead of 3 judges taking Children in Need of Assistance (CINA) and delinquency cases, the system would have 1 CINA, 1 Delinquency and 1 Judge who

handles both cases. Mary said that nothing is confirmed as of yet. Judges will continue to rotate.

Uma Ahluwalia, DHHS Director, proposed that the Commission write a letter in conjunction with the judges and DHMH regarding concerns expressed at the March meeting with the Juvenile Judges. The problem is that many steps need to be done within 30 days. A child needs certain evaluations and meetings in order to get a Certificate of Need. The judges talked about a case that took a very long time to get placed in an RTC because of issues about Value Options, timeframes and requirements. Theresa Bennett from Core Services first evaluates the cases, which then go to Value Options. The Commissioners discussed asking Teresa Bennett to speak at one of our meetings.

### **May 2011**

The Commission held its annual daylong retreat. At the retreat, Commissioners strategize to come up with the annual work plan for the coming year. The group identified the common theme or goal of Positive Youth Development Programs. (See article on pages 6-7)

### **June 2011**

Nominees for the FY12 Executive Committee were presented and the nominations were accepted. They are as follows: Francha Davis - Chair; Mark Resner - Vice-Chair; Gladstone Marcus- Secretary; Amy Morantes and Marge Currie - Co-Chairs, Care, Custody and Placement Committee; Chris Fogleman and Dana Pisanelli - Co-Chairs, Government and Community Relations Committee; Barbara Holtz, and Mary Poulin - Co- Chairs, Evaluation and Analysis Committee.

The Commission on Juvenile Justice met with Teresa Bennett via conference call on May 17, 2011. Ms Bennett's view was that few cases from DJS are turned down. She believes fewer cases would be turned down if the potentially accepting residential treatment center (RTC), rather than the DJS workers, submits the Certificate Of Need (CON). She also pointed out that Child Welfare youth are almost never turned down for an RTC because there is a longer documented record of mental health history, treatment, and placements for them. Child Welfare youth also tend to have diagnoses related to mood disorders rather than conduct disorders.

There was a reminder that the director of DHHS, Uma Ahluwalia would like the Commission to write a letter concerning the efficacy of the CON process. There was also a proposal to invite someone such as DHMH, Susan Tucker, to speak from the State's perspective as to the adequacy of funding of juvenile mental health needs. A final point was made that while placement in RTCs for adjudicated youth is important, it represents perhaps only 1 to 2% of that population. The Commissioners voted to have the Care, Custody and Placement Committee draft a letter that would be voted on at the July meeting.

Commissioners discussed current programs that are using the PYD approach. PYD youth services focus on strengths and resiliency. The belief is that youths benefit from opportunities such as skill building and positive roles and relationships such as sports teams, art programs, and mentors.

In Montgomery County, there is a three-pronged approach to PYD: Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression. Prevention programs are supervised programs for youth run by the Recreation Department, MCPS or DHHS. If youth do not respond to prevention, then they may go to DHHS for Intervention. If that does not work, then the Suppression level may involve the police and/or DJS. This year, budget constraints forced the cutting of some of these programs such as sports academies and MCPS programs for mentoring and tutoring. It was proposed to find a point person in DHHS to discuss current programs, which are using the PYD approach. A proposal was made to find out what programs the Commission may want to recommend for continued support by the County Council.

## **Care, Custody and Placement Committee**

**By Elijah Wheeler and Jennifer Gauthier, Co-Chairs**

In FY-11, the Care, Custody and Placement committee of the Commission on Juvenile Justice explored current programming in Montgomery County for the female population, including positive youth development, nightly reporting centers, and the need for a female shelter.

The committee worked closely with the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) and the Montgomery County Collaboration Council on Children, Youth and Families, to track the Request for Proposal that DJS had distributed for a gender specific shelter in Montgomery County. Towards the end of the fiscal year, the committee learned that the shelter was no longer needed in Montgomery County and that all efforts to fulfill the RFP were revoked.

The committee organized a field trip to the Fairfax Detention Center in Fairfax, Virginia. Due to the committee's involvement with matters at the local youth detention center (Alfred D. Noyes Children's Center), it felt compelled to explore other youth detention centers that are nationally recognized as models for detention centers. The committee observed the monthly numbers of those youth detained at the Alfred D. Noyes Children's Center with a specific focus on African American youth and the average length of stay.

The committee also began focusing on positive youth development and programs within Montgomery County that follow this approach. The committee shared information with the Commission on these programs, including the program outcomes. Discussions around nightly reporting centers and their success will continue throughout FY-12.

# **Government and Community Relations**

## **Committee**

**By Francha Davis, Chair**

During FY-11, the Government and Community Relations Committee continued to focus on increasing outreach to, and collaboration with, other individuals and organizations serving youth involved in the Juvenile Justice System (DJS). In addition, the Committee monitored and tracked legislation that affected the DJS, recommended the legislative agenda for the Commission, and advocated for legislation at the State level.

The Committee's goals for FY-11 were to:

- (1) Foster greater collaboration among state and county officials and agencies to ensure that services for juveniles are responsive to local needs and, in particular, to Montgomery County and the Prince Georges County region; and
- (2) Advocate for necessary changes to state and county resource allocation and, in particular, for re-allocation of responsibilities and resources from the state level to the county/regional level for programs and services that the Commission identifies as being managed at the local level.

Such collaboration and advocacy was accomplished through targeted involvement in the county budget process, the state legislative process and the state and county policy development process. This involved building relationships at the County, State and national level with individuals, organizations and agencies that impact the treatment of juveniles in the county/region.

During FY-11, the Committee made significant progress toward achieving these goals. The Committee's outreach list includes local and State legislators, other County Boards, Commissions and Task Forces, public and quasi-public agencies (Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Juvenile Services, Office of the Public Defender, Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families), as well as non-profit and community-based services providers for court-involved youth and juvenile justice commissions in other jurisdictions in Maryland.

The Committee was active in gathering information and conducting outreach to key policy makers at both the County and State level during the fiscal year.

- Commission members visited the County's Teen Court and participated in a field trip to Juvenile Court, hosted by agency member, Risa Mainprize, in October.
- Holly Maassarani, Co-Director, Youth Restorative Justice Initiatives, from the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, spoke at the October Commission Meeting.



- Agency Commission member and Dept. of Juvenile Services Assistant Regional Director, Maurice Sessions, spoke at the November Commission meeting about ways in which the Commission could support the Department of Juvenile Services.
- Also in November, Nick Moroney, Director for the State's Juvenile Justice Monitoring unit (JJMU), gave a short presentation about the JJMU.
- Members of the Commission participated in a field trip to the Fairfax County Juvenile Detention Center in March.
- The Committee facilitated the Commission's annual meeting with the Juvenile Court judges in March.
- Commission members initiated and participated in a conference call with Teresa Bennett, Child and Adolescent Coordinator for the Mental Health Core Service Agency to discuss the system of Value Options and issues identified by the Juvenile Court judges at their March meeting with the Commission.

At the Commission on Juvenile Justice's annual retreat in May, the Committee evaluated progress toward achieving the goals set out in the FY-11 work plan and fine-tuned its plans for FY-12. During FY-12, the Government and Community Relations Committee will focus its outreach on Positive Youth Development.

## **Evaluation and Analysis Committee:**

### **Examine Violence Prevention Initiative in**

### **Montgomery County**

**By Wendy Pulliam, Chair**

For FY-11, the Evaluation and Analysis Committee continued to conduct an analysis of data used for decision and policy making in the juvenile justice system. The purpose of analyzing and reviewing data was to make recommendations to improve the data, close services gaps and meet service needs. The committee believes that in the absence of such data it is difficult to appropriately identify service needs for youths and assess where service gaps/needs exist.

Consequently, the Evaluation and Analysis Committee decided to focus on obtaining data regarding a specific program, the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI). According to the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, VPI is a program, which began in Baltimore City in 2008 and was subsequently expanded statewide. The purpose of the program is to provide "intensified levels of supervision and services for youth who are at highest risk of being victims or perpetrators of crimes of violence" to prevent juvenile homicides, non-fatal shootings and victimization. According the Standard Operating Procedures Manual, the initiative integrates intensive surveillance with a system of graduated responses to ensure that in the case of non-compliance, immediate and appropriate sanctions are consistently applied.

The committee requested that Maurice Sessoms, Assistant Regional Director, Department of Juvenile Services and L. Blaine Clark, Family Intervention Specialist and Violence Prevention Intervention Specialist, make presentations to the Commission, providing data and background information about the VPI program. The committee focused on obtaining data on the efficiency of the VPI program and data regarding youth in Montgomery County. Other questions that were considered included: how many Montgomery County youth are under VPI supervision? What is the recidivism rate for Montgomery County youth? And how does DJS determine in which county to place a youth - is it by residence or by courtesy supervision?

The committee had difficulty obtaining data and was directed to State Stat. At this time, it still does not have the data. The committee will continue to investigate the availability of VPI data from Montgomery County as part of its FY-12 work plan.